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THE ROLE OF CANADIAN AND NEWFOUNDLAND SHIPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOVIET ARCTIC

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One of the major differences between the Canadian Arctic and the Soviet Arctic lies in the area of marine communications. Whereas, despite repeated efforts, Canada's Northwest Passage shows no sign of ever becoming a commercial route, the Soviet Union possesses a viable regular commercial routeway, the Northern Sea Route, from Atlan- Pacific. Each summer convoy ships, with icebreaker ri where required, move eastwards from Archangel and mansk, and westwards from Bering Strait to the ths of the great Siberian rivers, the Ob', Yenisey, Lena, girka, Yana and Kolyma. Each of these rivers is served by a fleet of river steamers and barges, and the ocean-going vessels trans-ship their cargoes to these craft at the mouths of the rivers. [1]

To give some indication of the volumes of cargo involved: in 1974 the timber port of Igarka on the Yenisey shipped out 1.24 million tons of timber via the Northern Sea Route in a navigation season of 128 days. [2] The previous year, the port of Dudinka, also on the Yenisey, and the port for the massive copper/nickel mining complex at nearby Noril'sk, exported 3,225,000 tons of copper/nickel ores via the Sea Route. [3] Each season a considerable number of ships

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also make the through-passage from Atlantic to Pacific, or vice-versa, but this traffic is minimal compared to that bound to or from the various river mouths.

One aspect which will come as a surprise to most Canadians, and one which Soviet authorities seem strangely reluctant to admit, is that this remarkable, sophisticated communications system owes a considerable debt to Canada and Newfoundland. When one checks the histories of the ships which bore the brunt of opening up the Northern Sea Route in the Twenties and Thirties, one finds that the bulk of them were ships which started their careers in Canadian and Newfoundland waters, and whose names are still well remembered here.

With the outbreak of World War I on August 4, 1914, the Russian Imperial Government found itself in a decidedly sticky position with regard to links with its allies. The German Navy controlled the Baltic; in the south the Turks commanded the Bosporus and Dardanelles, effectively blocking access to the Black Sea. Vladivostok was unrestricted, but the Trans-Siberian Railway, single-track for almost its entire length, was unable to cope effectively with the massive volume of war materials required to keep the Russian regiments in the field.

In the north, the Murmansk railway, which would play such a major role in World War II was not yet completed. Thus Russia's only reliable link with its Allies was via the port of Archangel on the White Sea. Through this port would have to pass thousands of tons of goods to keep the Russian military machine in operation, not only rifles, shells and explosives, but rubber, cotton, and all the other imported goods which Russia required.

The major drawback was that Archangel is ice-bound for several months of the year. Worse still, Russia's only respectable icebreaker, the **Yermak,** was bottled up in the Gulf of Finland. Thus, as soon as war broke out, Russia's need for icebreakers became acute.

Immediately Russia turned to her Allies. The only significant numbers of icebreaking ships at that time belonged to Canada and Newfoundland. Hence in the fall of 1914 negotiations began between the Russian embassy in Washington and Ottawa. [4] The result was the sale of two icebreakers right away. They were the **Earl Grey** and the **Minto.**

The two vessels provided the winter ferry service across Northumberland Strait from Pictou to Charlottetown. In a very real sense they were Prince Edward Island's link with the mainland. **Minto**, built in Dundee in 1899 had a displacement of just over 2,000 tons, and with engines of 2,900 h.p. had a top speed of 14 knots. For several summers prior to her sale in 1914, she had made trips to Hudson Bay, doing survey work in connection with the development of Port Nelson as the terminus of the Hudson Bay Railway.

The **Earl Grey**, built by Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness in 1909, represented a typical Canadian compromise. She served the dual functions of icebreaker and vice-regal yacht. For her day she was an extremely powerful vessel; with a displacement of 3,400 tons, and engines of 7,000 h.p., her top speed was 18 knots. Her lines were quite definitely yacht-like with a fine clipper bow, raked funnel, and a palatial suite for the Governor-General on the promenade deck.

With the **Minto** she battered her way through the Northumberland Strait ice every winter. In her other capacity she made at least one trip to the Canadian Arctic. In the summer of 1910 Lord Grey, the Governor-General of Canada (best known to most Canadians as the donor of the Grey Cup), decided to make a positive gesture of his interest in the development of the Hudson Bay Route by travelling the route himself. Reaching Norway House by rail and steamer, he travelled down the Nelson River in a fleet of 11 canoes, to Port Nelson. There the **Earl Grey** was waiting to take him back to Halifax in style.

One other Canadian icebreaker was purchased by the Russians that fall; the contrast with the **Earl Grey** could hardly have been greater. She was the **J.T. Horne,** a little

harbour icebreaker and tug of only 400 tons built in Port Arthur on Lake Superior in 1913, to keep traffic moving at the Lakehead. She started her long trip down through the Great Lakes, and having coaled at Sydney, N.S., she ran into a bad storm, and ran back to that port. At this point her captain resigned rather than face a winter trip to the White Sea in such a craft. His replacement tried again, but another storm drove her back to Halifax. Next spring (1915) she started out again and after calling at Louisburg and St. John's, safely crossed to Scotland and on to Archangel. [5] There she was renamed the **Solombala.**

Despite the best efforts of the **Earl Grey** (renamed **Kanada**) and the **Minto** (renamed the **Skuratov**), there was a disastrous pile-up of shipping in the ice of the White Sea in the winter of 1914-1915. Hence the following summer the Russian representatives appeared in St. John's aiming to purchase some of Newfoundland's icebreaking fleet. At that time Newfoundland possessed probably the best fleet of icebreaking ships in the world.

The first two purchases, in fairly rapid succession in 1915-1916 were the two Reid Newfoundland Co. passenger vessels, the **Bruce** and the **Lintrose**. [6] They represented Newfoundland's link with Canada, plying winter and summer across Cabot Strait from Port-aux-Basques to Sydney. The **Lintrose** was the queen of the Reid Co. fleet. Built in Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1913 she had engines of 3,500 h.p., a displacement of 3,800 tons and a speed of 14½ knots. There is a fine model of this ship in the Fisheries College in St. John's.

The **Bruce**, purchased by the Russian Government in the spring of 1915, was slightly older. She had been built on the Clyde in 1912 to replace the old **Bruce**, wrecked near Louisburg in 1911. She was somewhat smaller than the **Lintrose**, at 2,900 tons; engines of 2,850 h.p. and a speed of 15 knots. Both vessels were taken to Archangel by Newfoundland crews, under the command of Captain Stevenson in each case. The **Lintrose** was renamed the **Sadko**, and the **Bruce** the **Solovey Budimirovich**.

The Russian agents now turned their attention to the ships of St. John's steel fleet, i.e. the steel-built sealing vessels. These were all quite new, the oldest, Harvey's ship the **Adventure**, having been built in Dundee in 1906.

Ultimately five sealing vessels were purchased: Job Bros.' **Beothic**, Harvey's **Adventure, Bonaventure**, and **Bellaventure**, and Baine Johnston Co.'s **Iceland.**[7] The **Adventure** was not only the oldest, she was also the largest. With a displacement of 3,400 tons, she had engines of 2,850 h.p. and a top speed of 12 knots. The other three, Job Bros.' **Beothic** and A.J. Harvey and Co.'s **Bonaventure** and **Bellaventure** were all built on the Clyde in 1908. All were around 3,000 tons displacement, with engines of 2,000 to 2,300 h.p. and a top speed of 13 knots. The **Iceland** will be discussed later.

Apart from the latter vessel, all these ships played a vital role in the economy of Newfoundland and their names are fondly remembered. Many Newfoundlanders can recall personally the exploits of these ships at the ice every spring, and every Newfoundlander is familir with the **Bellaventure's** role in the **Newfoundland** disaster of 1914, when she brought the survivors of the disaster and the frozen corpses of those that did not survive, back to St. John's.

Now everyone however will remember the roles these vessels assumed for the remainder of the year. They then became general-purpose cargo vessels, and for ice-strengthened vessels reached some rather strange ports. The **Beothic, Bonaventure** and **Bellaventure** were all in the fruit trade for several summers, hauling bananas from Jamaica to New York and Boston. All of them, in different years made fall and winter voyages to the Mediterranean, hauling dried cod to Alicante in Spain and Naples, Italy. One year the **Bonaventure** made a voyage with cod to Pernambuco and Bahia in Brazil. Then there were the more mundane cargoes; copper ore from Tilt Cove to Philadelphia; apples from Portland, Maine to Hamburg, Germany; and the never-ending shuttle from North Sydney to St. John's with coal.

All four of these sealers had seen service in the North however. Almost every summer between 1906 and 1915 the **Adventure** was chartered by the French fur company of Revillon Frères, and re-supplied their posts in Hudson and Ungava bays. In 1910 under charter to Harry Whitney, the American millionaire hunter, the **Beothic** spent the summer in the northern waters of Baffin Bay. And from 1912 through 1915, in varying combinations, **Beothic, Bellaventure** and **Bonaventure** spent their summers hauling men and supplies to Port Nelson in Hudson Bay, in connection with the building of the Hudson Bay Railway. [8]

The **Beothic, Bellaventure** and **Adventure** all sailed from this side direct to Archangel late in 1915 — all with Newfoundland crews. The sale of the **Bonaventure** hung in the balance for a while, and was not settled until almost Christmas, by which time she was in the Mediterranean with a load of codfish. [9] The **Bonaventure**, still with her Newfoundland crew, proceeded first to Glasgow, then north to Archangel. The crews all had great stories to tell of their visit to Russia when they returned. [10] One of the most interesting comments was that of Captain Bob Randell of the **Bonaventure** who reported having steamed through a large patch of whitecoats in the White Sea on March 19th., 1916; he only regretted he did not have sealing equipment and 100 Newfoundland sealers with him.[11] We will hear more of the White Sea whitecoats later.

As with the other ships, these vessels were renamed: **Beothic** became **Georgiy Sedov; Bellaventure** became **Aleksandr Sibiryakov; Bonaventure** became **Vladimir Rusanov;** and **Adventure** became **Semen Dezhnev.**

I have not forgotten Baine Johnstone's ship the **Iceland,** which may be confusing to some of my readers. This was not the old wooden sealer, the **Iceland.** Indeed the ship in question never reached Newfoundland at all. She was a steel-built vessel, larger than the **Lintrose** i.e. about 4,000 tons displacement, with engines of 3,200 h.p. and a speed of 13½ knots. She had been ordered by Baine Johnstone & Co. from a shipbuilder on the Clyde, but even before she was launched, the company sold her to the Russians, no doubt at a handsome profit. She was launched in 1915 and reached Archangel late in that year. [12] She was renamed **Semen Chelyuskin.**

The last of the group of Canadian and Newfoundland ships to be purchased by the Russians was the Canadian icebreaker **J.D. Hazen.** In February of 1916 when the Russians made their first overtures, the **J.D. Hazen** was still being built, at Canadian Vickers yard in Montreal. She was launched in May, 1916, the first modern icebreaker to be built in Canada. With a displacement of 5,250 tons, she had engines of 8,000 h.p. and could steam at 16 knots. She reached Archangel in January 1917, and was renamed the **Mikula Selyaninovich.**

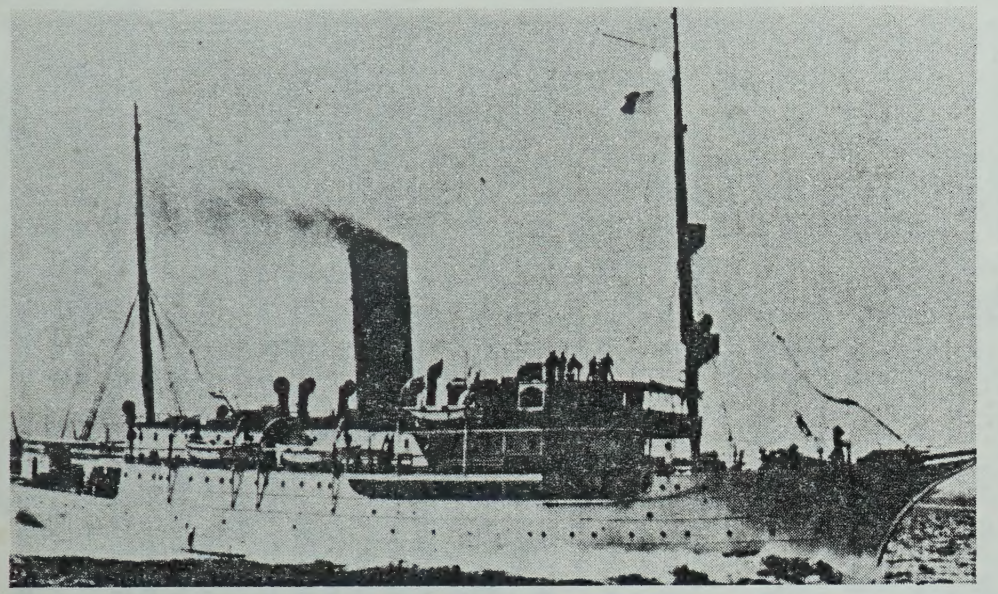

Figure 1. The *Earl Grey* on her trials on the Clyde in 1909. Photo courtesy Mr. Thomas Appleton.

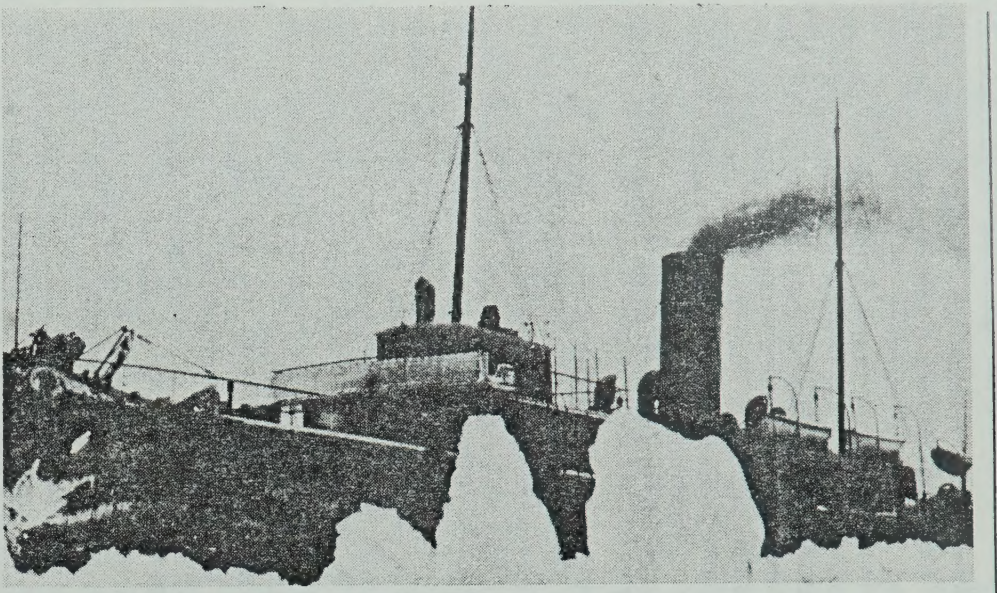

Figure 2. The *Minto* jammed in the ice in Northumberland Strait, while on the Prince Edward Island winter service. Photo courtesy Mr. Thomas Appleton.

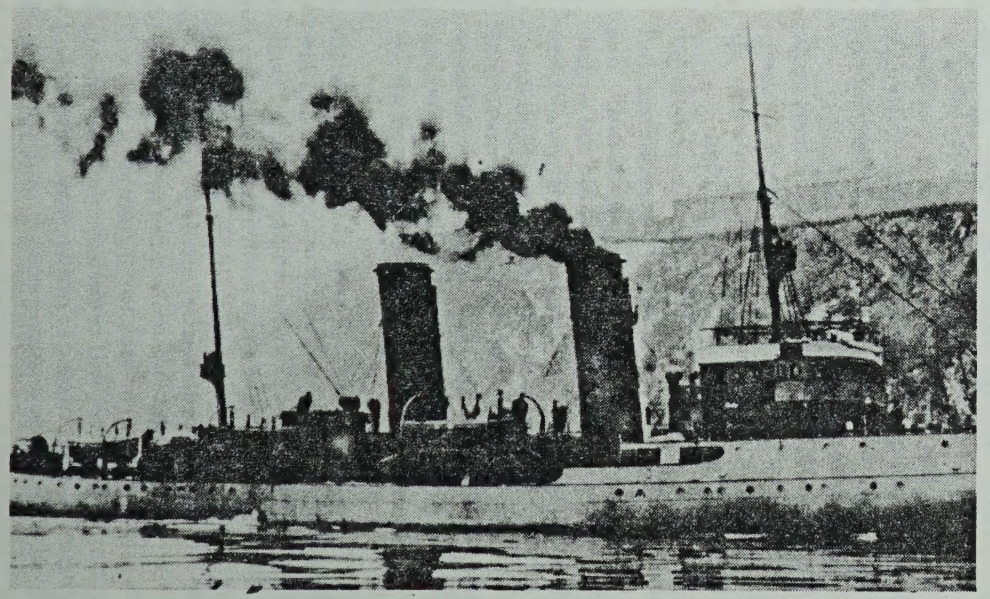

Figure 3. The icebreaker *J.D. Hazen* passing Quebec City en route for Archangel, January 1917. Photo courtesy Mr. Thomas Appleton.

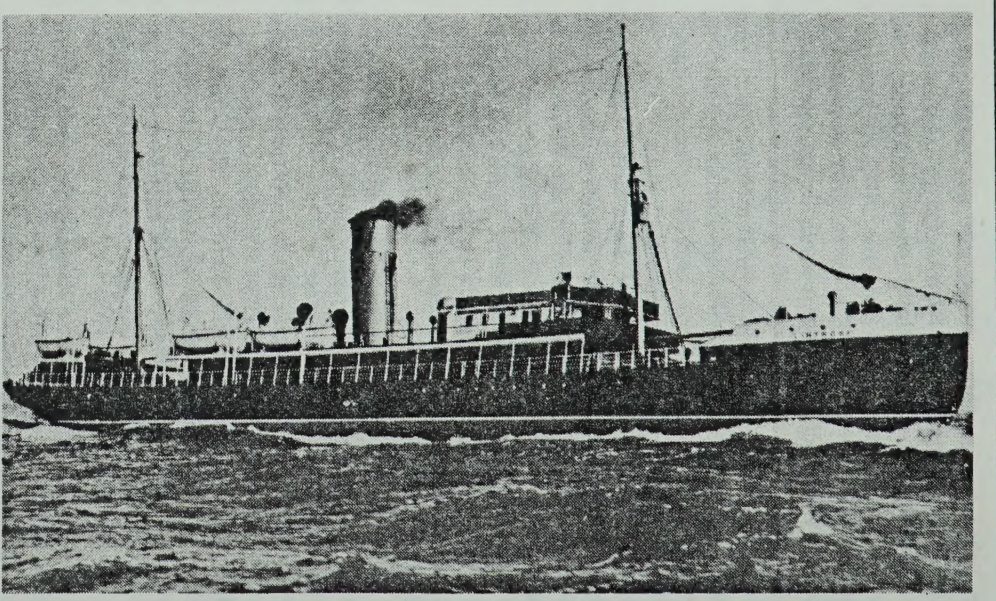

Figure 4. The *Lintrose* on her regular run from Port aux Basques to Sydney, between 1913 and 1915. Photo courtesy Mr. Ted Drover.

In the fall of 1915 there were many rumours current in St. John's that the **Nascopie** had also been sold to the Russians. She was another of the steel sealing vessels, jointly owned by Job Bros. and the Hudson's Bay Company; every summer she plied the waters of Hudson Bay, resupplying the posts of the latter company. In fact the rumours were half-correct: Job Bros. sold their share in her to the H.B.C. and the latter chartered her to the Russian Government for six months starting January 1916. So the **Nascopie** too was in the White Sea, before returning to establish her name in the Canadian North. [13]

Leaving Newfoundland with its sealing fleet decimated, its links with Canada disrupted, and its cargo fleet depleted, let us now switch our attention to the White Sea and see how the different ships fared. Their task was to escort freighters through the ice of the White Sea, but also carrying war materials themselves. Thus even on her trip to Archangel in January 1916, the **Bellaventure,** Capt. Charles Cross, picked up 50,000 rifles and a cargo of ammunition at Aleksandrovsk (near the present Murmansk) and hauled them to Archangel. [14]

There were very soon casualties among them. The first was the **Sadko** (**Lintrose**). While taking a party of officials to inspect progress on the Murmansk Railway, she hit a rock in Kandalak-shaya Guba (the western arm of the White Sea) in June 1916 and sank with a massive gash in her side. [15] Then in January 1917, the **Chelyuskin** (**Iceland**) blew up in the outer port of Archangel while unloading munitions. There was considerable loss of life and very serious damage to the harbour installations. [16]

With the Revolution in November 1917, the Bol'sheviks gained control of Archangel and all these vessels hoisted the Hammer and Sickle. Almost immediately a plan was put forward that would for the first time link the names of these ships with that of the Northern Sea Route. The plan was to ship wheat from Western Siberia, where there was a surplus, down the Ob' and its tributaries to the sea by river craft; there it would be trans-shipped to seagoing vessels and hauled to Archangel, where the food situation was critical. Early in August 1918, the river craft started downriver from Omsk. Meanwhile the seagoing convoy was being assembled in Archangel; the icebreaking vessels allocated to escort the freighters were the **Dezhnev** (**Adventure**); **Rusanov** (**Bonaventure**); **Sedov** (**Beothic**); **Sibiryakov** (**Bellaventure**); and **Solovey Budimirovich** (**Bruce**). [17]

But the convoy never sailed: on August 1 ships of the Royal Navy began forcing their way up the Dvina to Archangel. This was the beginning of the 'Intervention', whereby British, Canadian and American troops assisted the White reactionary forces in fighting agains the Bol'sheviks. In an attempt to deny the British access to Archangel, the **Mikula Selyaninovich** (**J.D. Hazen**) and the icebreaker **Svyatogor** were scuttled to block the channel. In fact the job was bungled; the Royal Navy ships got past, and the scuttled vessels were refloated. [18]

All the ships in the White Sea now came under the control of the Royal Navy and the plans for the convoy to the Kara Sea were aborted. Several of the icebreakers went to Britain for a refit in the fall of 1918, e.g. **Kanada** and **Mikula Selyaninovich**. While the former returned to the White Sea, the latter stayed in Britain. Subsequently she was handed over to the French, and in 1923 was bought back by Canada. Under the name **Mikula** she was a familiar sight on the St. Lawrence up until 1937. [19]

The **Dezhnev** (**Adventure**) also made a trip to Britain late in 1918. On the return trip, on December 18, hauling munitions from Britain to Murmansk, she disappeared without trace off the coast of Norway. [20]

The food situation in Archangel under the Whites was no better than it had been under the Reds; the political scene had also changed in Western Siberia, where the wheatlands were now controlled by the Whites under Admiral Kolchak. The White Russians therefore decided to mount a grain expedition via the Kara Sea, for the summer of 1919. In part it involved the exchange of grain for cargoes of industrial goods from Britain, but for the most part, it involved the movement of grain down the Ob' by river craft to rendezvous with seagoing ships which would haul the grain via the Kara and Barents seas to Archangel. The ships assembled for the task were a pretty motley collection; among the escorting icebreaking vessels were **Ivan Susanin** as the **Minto** has been renamed, the little **Solombala** (**J.T. Horne**) and **Solovey Budimirovich** (**Bruce**). In the event the operation was only a limited success; with the defeat of the Whites in Western Siberia, the trans-shipping operation at the mouth of the Ob' was abandoned. [21]

The Whites were also in full retreat in the Archangel area, the Allies having withdrawn their support. With the final collapse of the White regime in Archangel, the **Kanada** (**Earl Grey**) was an active participant in one of the most bizarre episodes of the Intervention. On February 19, 1920 General Miller, leader of the Whites, fled from Archangel with a large number of White officers, officials and their families, aboard the icebreaker **Kozma Minin**, leaving his rank-and-file soldiers to the mercies of the Bol'sheviks. [22] The **Kanada** was armed with a couple of 3-inch guns and set off down-river in hot pursuit. She caught up with the **Minin** and there began one of the strangest battles in naval history; an artillery duel between two icebreakers working through ice.[23] **Minin** gave the **Kanada** the slip during a snowstorm, but the former was running low on fuel. At this juncture the **Minin** encountered the **Rusanov, Sibiryakov** and the small Russian icebreaker **Taymyr.** [24] Under the threat of **Minin's** guns all the coal was transferred from these ships, and they were left drifting helplessly in the ice as the **Minin** resumed her flight. The **Kanada** caught up with her again, but when one of her guns was put out of action the captain abandoned pursuit and turned for home.

On May 15, 1920, **Kanada** was renamed **III International**, and joined the Soviet White Sea Fleet as an auxiliary cruiser. Already events were unfolding which would lead to the next dramatic event in her long career. In January, 1920, the **Solovey Budimirovich** (**Bruce**) had been dispatched by the White Government from Archangel to Murmansk with supplies and passengers, mainly highranking White officials and their families, leaving Archangel while the going was good. En route she was to pick up a cargo of reindeer meat in Cheshskaya Guba. [25] In the event she became stuck in the ice and drifted east through the straits of Karskiye Vorota into the Kara Sea. Meanwhile back in Archangel the White authorities had more pressing worries than the fate of the **Solovey Budimirovich**, and her 85 passengers, including women and children. By the time the Reds had consolidated their position in Archangel, and were able to give some thought to the vessel's predicament, she was in a serious plight, out of coal, and with food running low.

Two vessels were sent to her rescue: **III International**

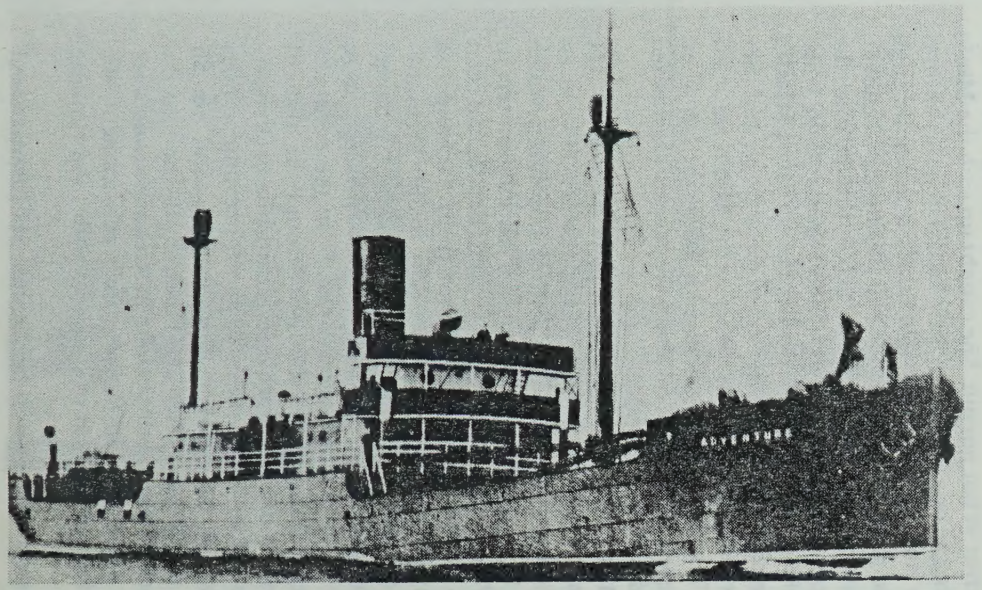

Figure 5. The *Adventure*, first of the St. John's steel sealing fleet. Photo courtesy Mr. Ted Drover.

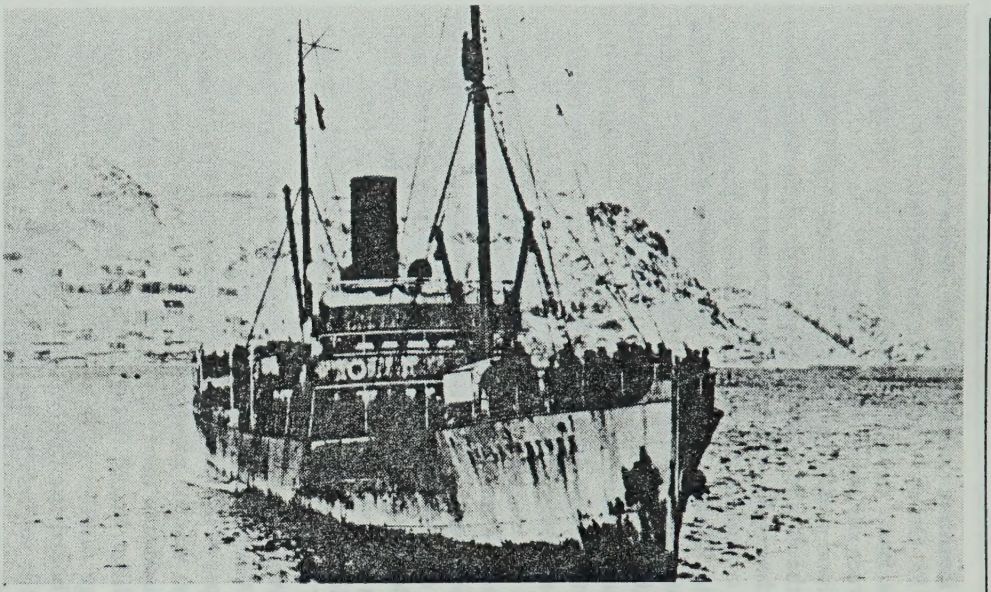

Figure 6. The *Bellaventure* returning to harbour with the victims and survivors of the *Newfoundland* disaster, April 1914. Photo courtesy Mr. Ted Drover.

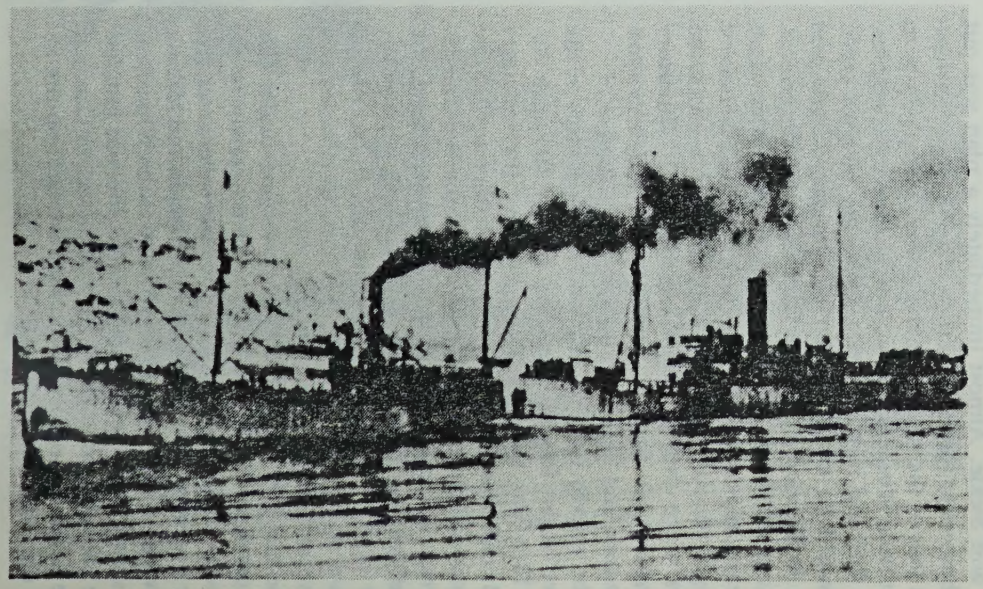

Figure 7. The collision between the *Beothic* (left) and the *Bonaventure* during the race out through the Narrows at the start of the 1913 seal

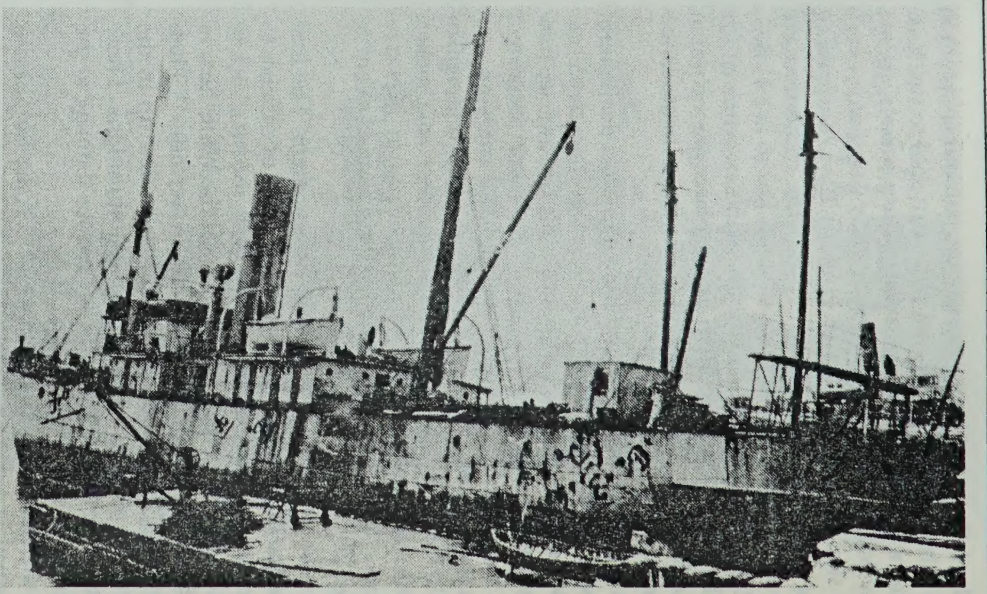

Figure 8. The *Beothic* in St. John's harbour, showing the damage she sustained in her collision with the *Bonaventure*, March 1913. Photo

sailed from Archangel on June 15, 1920; meanwhile in response to an appeal to the Norwegian government the icebreaker **Svyatogor** (later renamed **Krasin**), which had been acquired by the British Admiralty, was on her way from Britain under the Norwegian flag, and with the veteran Norwegian arctic explorer, Otto Sverdrup in command. [26] On the 19th both vessels reached the **Solovey Budimirovich**, which by now had drifted with the ice to 75°25'N, in the middle of the Kara Sea. Coal and provisions were transferred to her and all three vessels started south. One interesting aspect is that several White officers and officials sought asylum aboard the **Svyatogor** which was sailing under the Norwegian flag. On July 3 **Solovey Budimirovich** and **III International** reached Archangel. Shortly thereafter, **III International** was again renamed, becoming **Fedor Litke.**

With the railway system demolished and the economy totally disrupted, the food situation in Archangel was, if possible, even worse than ever by now. Hence in the summer of 1920 another expedition to the Kara Sea was organized, for the purpose of hauling grain from Western Siberia, this time under the Soviet flag. Once again the former Newfoundland ships played a major part. [27] A motley collection of freighters was escorted to the mouths of the Ob' and the Yenisey by **Sedov, Rusanov, Malygin** (as the **Solovey Budimirovich** has now been renamed) and **Sibiryakov.** Once again the fleets of river craft laden with grain headed down the two great Siberian rivers, to be met by convoys of seagoing ships at the mouths, where the grain was transhipped. Hauled back to Archangel, it greatly alleviated the chronic food shortage in that city.

In the winter of 1920-21 the Newfoundland ships would make yet another significant contribution to the health and welfare of the citizens of Archangel; the circumstances here will provide a source of quiet amusement to Newfoundlanders. That winter a typhus epidemic was raging in the city; not only was there a food shortage, there was a total lack of soap, the basic item for combating such an epidemic. In this crisis somebody thought of making soap from seal fat, and hit on the bright idea of mounting an expedition to the neck of the White Sea, traditionally a harp seal whelping ground on a scale comparable to the Newfoundland sealing grounds. [28] Then somebody remembered that the icebreakers **Sibiryakov, Sedov** and **Rusanov** were lying idle in the harbour, and it was proposed to send them out to hunt seals. To this there was strong opposition, because it was felt that such large vessels would be much too awkward for the job, and **because they hadn't been designed for such a purpose!** That is how much the Soviet authorities knew about the past histories of these ships.

In the event they set off on February 1, 1921 and hunted whitecoats for two months, returning with 43,720 pelts and a considerable quantity of seal meat. From then on, until the Second World War, and possibly even later, these ships, and the **Malygin** (**Bruce**) made a sealing trip to the neck of the White Sea every spring. [29] In 1928, for example, they brought in 175,000 pelts.

In the 1921 season, an effort was made to place the Kara Sea expedition on a sounder footing. [30] The emphasis was on the importing of consumer goods, e.g. agricultural and mining machinery from Western Europe, and the export from Western Siberia of agricultural products such as grain and wool, as well as the established movement of grain from the mouths of the Siberian rivers. Once again **Sedov, Rusanov** and **Sibiryakov**, along with the **Malygin** took part in the operation.

Throughout the Twenties the Kara Sea expedition increased in scale. With re-establishment of the railway system, the movement of grain to Archangel was phased out and greater stress was laid on the importing of machinery, etc. and the exporting of grain and raw materials from Western Siberia to Europe. Throughout the Twenties the ship which provided the icebreaker escort to these convoys of freighters as they plodded across the Kara Sea, was the **Malygin** (**Bruce**). **Rusanov** and **Sedov** also provided assistance in some years. [31]

The expansion of activity from the Kara Sea to the whole of the Northern Sea Route developed gradually, although development of the Northern Sea Route from Atlantic to Pacific as a normally-operating waterway had been a basic item of Lenin's policy from the start. First however, it was essential to explore the Soviet Arctic thoroughly, sound and chart the channels, and establish radio and weather stations.

The efforts in this direction began almost accidentally. When Nobile's airship the **Italia** crashed on the ice to the north of Svalbard (Spitsbergen) in the summer of 1928, an international rescue effort was launched. Ultimately the survivors were rescued by the Soviet icebreaker **Krasin.** What is not generally realized however, is that two other Soviet vessels spent a good part of the summer of 1928 searching for the missing Italians. The **Malygin** fought her way north through very heavy ice to the east of Svalbard, and launched an aerial search from there. [32] Meanwhile the **Sedov** conducted a search of the southern coasts of Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa (Franz Josef Land), propably the first Soviet vessel to visit that archipelago. [33]

The following year (1929) the **Sedov** returned to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa, and established a weather station at Bukhta Tikhaya. [34] In part this was to forestall the Norwegians who were showing considerable interest in this part of the Soviet sector of the North. **Sedov** also steamed north of Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa, reaching a latitude of 82°14'N, a world record at the time.

The following season (1930) an important step in the development of the Northern Sea Route was made. In 1913 an Imperial Russian expedition had discovered the archipelago of Severnaya Zemlya, mid-way along the Sea Route, but it had been able to explore only the east and south coasts, and only sketchily even then. [35] How far the landmass extended north and west was totally unknown. Hence in the summer of 1930, it was planned to land an exploration party on the archipelago.

The ship chosen for this task was the **Sedov.** First she made another visit to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa to re-supply and enlarge that station there. Then after coaling from the **Sibiryakov** which had come north with coal to Russkaya Gavan in northern Novaya Zemlya. **Sedov** headed east across the Kara Sea. A party of four men, with dogteams and led by G. Ushakov, was landed on a little island off the west coast of Severnaya Zemlya, and a base camp was built. [36]

(To be concluded in next issue)

NOTES

[1] The best overall treatment of the development of the Soviet Northern Sea Route (in English) is to be found in: Armstrong, T., *The Northern Sea Route: Soviet exploitation of the North East Passage* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1952). Dr. Armstrong is acknowledged as the leading authority on the Northern Sea Route in the West, and since the appearance of his book he has

updated the information on a regular basis with an annual note in the *Polar Record*, the publication of the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge, England.

[2] Armstrong, T. "The Northern Sea Route, 1974", *Polar Record*, 17, no. 110 (1975), 550-551.

[3] Armstrong, T. "The Northern Sea Route, 1973", *Polar Record*, 17, no. 107 (1974), 174-175.

[4] For a discussion of the sale of the Canadian vessels to the Russian Government see: Appleton, T.E. & W. Barr, "Breaking the ice with the Russians," *Canadian Shipping and Marine Engineering*, 47, no. 11 (1976), 22-27.

[5] St. John's *Evening Herald*, April 24, 1915, p. 4; St. John's *Evening Telegram*, April 24, 1915, p. 9, and May 4, 1915; *Halifax Herald*, July 22, 1915, p. 10.

[6] For details of the sale of the *Lintrose* see St. John's *Evening Telegram*, January 29, 1915, p. 6; and for the *Bruce* see St. John's *Evening Telegram*, July 5, 1915, p. 7, and St. John's *Evening Herald*, July 5, 1915, p. 5

[7] The details of the sales of all these vessels (and also a certain amount of rumour on the topic) can be found in the pages of the *Evening Herald* and *Evening Telegram* for the period November 1 until December 23, 1915. For an illuminating account of the sale of the *Beothic* see the Hon. R.B. Job's journal for 1915 (Job Family Papers, P5/11, Newfoundland Provincial Archives).

[8] This brief outline of the careers of these ships is derived from the pages of the *Evening Herald* and the *Evening Telegram* for the appropriate period.

[9] *Evening Herald*, December 23, 1915, p. 8; *Evening Telegram*, December 23, 1915, p. 6.

[10] See for example *Daily News*, May 6, 1916, p. 3 (return of *Bonaventure's* crew); *Evening Telegram*, March 16, 1916, p. 3 and *Daily News*, March 16, 1916, p. 3 (for the return of *Bellaventure's* crew); *Daily News*, February 2, 1916, p. 3 and *Evening Herald*, February 1, 1916, p. 5 (return of *Beothic's* crew).

[11] *Daily News*, May 8, 1916, p. 3.

[12] *Evening Herald*, September 6, 1915, p. 4; *Evening Herald*, September 17, 1915, p. 5.

[13] Mack, G.E. "Breaking the ice for the Allies," *Beaver*, 269, no. 3 (1938), 20-25.

[14] *Evening Telegram*, March 16, 1916, p. 8.

[15] Zalesskiy, N.A., "Flot russkogo severa v gody Pervoy Mirovoy i Grazhdanskoy voyn," *Letopis' Severa*, 6 (1972), 132; Simonov, P.V., "Pod'em ledokola 'Sadko'," *EPRON*, 8-9 (1935), 188-266.

[16] Zalesskiy, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

[17] Novikov, V.D., "Pervye karskiye operatsii," in *Russkiye moreplavateli*, V.S. Lupach (ed.) (Moskva, Voyennoye Izdatel'stvo Ministerstva Oborony Soyuza SSSR, 1953), pp. 367-368; Belov, M.I. "Sovetskoye arkticheskoye moreplavaniye 1917-1932 gg.," *Istoriya oktrytiya i osvoyeniya Severnogo Morskogo Puti*, tom III. Ya. Ya. Gakkel' and M.B. Chernenko (eds.) (Leningrand Izdatel'stvo "Morskoy Transport," 1959), pp. 41-42. This is the third of four volumes, comprising the official Soviet history of the exploration of the Soviet Arctic and the development of the Northern Sea Route.

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[19] Appleton and Barr, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[20] Zalesskiy, 1972, *op. cit.*, p. 153; Mr. J. Ingram (former shipping correspondent *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*), personal communication, May 1976.

[21] Belov, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-62; Margolin, A., "Anglo-frantsuzskaya interventsiya na severe Rossii i Severnyy Morskoy Put'," *Sovetskaya Arktika*, 11 (1940), 77-80; Margolin, A.V., "Mezhdunarodnaya interventsiya 1918-1920 godov i Severnyy Morskoy Put'," *Letopis' Severa*, 1 (1949), 154-174.

[22] Nikolayeva, A.G. & V.I. Sarankin, *Sil'nee l'dov* (Moskva, Izdatel'stvo "Morskoy Transport," 1963), p. 31; Strakhovskiy, L.I., *Intervention at Archangel: The story of Allied intervention and Russian counter-revolution in North Russia 1918-1920* (New York, Howard Fertig, 1971), p. 253.

[23] Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[24] Chernenko, M.B., "Delo voyennogo moryaka Nikolayeva," *Letopis' Severa*, 4 (1964), 218-223.

[25] Bolotnikov, N., "Dreyf i osvobozhdeniye ledokol'nogo parokhoda *Solovey Budimirovich*," *Sovetskaya Arktika*, 4 (1941), 89-99.

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[27] Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-51; Bolotnikov, N. Ya., "Sibirskaya khlebnaya ekspeditsiya 1920 goda," *Letopis' Severa*, 2 (1957), 34-50; Novikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 370-372.

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[29] Belov, M.I., "Nauchnoye i khozyaystvennoye osvoyeniye Sovetskogo Severa 1933-1945 gg," *Istoriya otkrytiya i osvoyeniya Severnogo Morskogo Puti*, tom IV. (Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Gidrometeorologicheskoye, 1969), pp. 29-29. This is the final volume in the official history of the Northern Sea Route.

[30] Seleznev, S.A., "Moryaki Arkhangel'ska v karskoy ekspeditsii 1921 goda," *Letopis' Severa*, 6 (1972), 105-119; Novikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 372-373; Belov, 1959, *op. cit.*, 161-172.

[31] Belov, *ibid.*, pp. 172, 215. This includes a general assessment of the impact of these expeditions, complete with statistical data, pp. 209-215.

[32] Vize, V. Yu., "Ekspeditsiya na l/p 'Malygin' k vostochnomu Sval'bardu v 1928 godu," *Trudy Instituta po Izucheniya Severa*, 45 (1929), 5-14; Samoylovich, R.L., *Vo l'dakh Arkitiki: pokhod "Krasina" leto 1928 goda* (Leningrad, Izdaniye Vsesoyuznogo Arkticheskogo Instituta, 1934).

[33] Yevgenov, N.I., "Ledokol'nyy parokhod 'Gerogiy Sevov' v poiskovykh ekspeditsiyakh 1928 goda," *Trudy Instituta po Izucheniya Severa*, 45 (1929), 96-112.

[34] Wiese, W. "Die Expedition des Eisbrechers 'Sedow' nach Franz-Josefs-Land zwecks Aufbau einer meteorologischen Radiostation," *Arktis*, 2 (1929), 126-128; Shmidt, O. Yu., "Iz dnevnikov i statey O. Yu. Shmidta," *Letopis' Severa*, 3 (1962), 15-57; Belov, 1959, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-352; Samoilowitsch, R., "Das nördlichste geophysikalische Polarobservatorium auf Franz-Josef-Land," *Petermanns Mitteilungen*, 76 (1930), 136-137.

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[36] Urvantsev, N.N., *Dva goda na Severnoy Zemle* (Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Glavsevmorputi, 1935), pp. 32-65; Soklov-Mikitov, I.S., *Na probuzhdennoy zemle* (Moskva, Gosudarstvennoye Izdatel'stvo Geograficheskoy Literatury, 1951), pp. 7-75; Samoilowitsch, R., "Die zweite arktische Forschungreise auf dem Eisbrecher 'Sedow' 1930," *Petermanns Mitteilungen*, 77 (1931), 57-61.

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With best wishes to the Boreal Institute,
William Barr

THE ROLE OF CANADIAN AND NEWFOUNDLAND SHIPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOVIET ARCTIC PART II (Conclusion)

JAN 4 1979

—William Barr
Department of Geography
University of Saskatchewan

Next year it was **Maygin's** turn to visit the High Arctic. With the first **Inturist** cruise ever to go to the Arctic, she steamed north to Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa. There she rendez-vous'd briefly with the German airship **Graf Zeppelin** which was making a three-day arctic flight. [37] The main purpose of this rendez-vous appears to have been to exchange mail for philatelic purposes.

After these preliminary ventures into the western part of the Soviet Arctic, in 1932 it was felt by the authorities that the time had come to try to send a vessel right through the Northern Sea Route in one season, clearly a prime requisite if it were to become a commercial route. While four ships had been right through from Pacific to Atlantic previously, all had been forced to winter at some intermediate point.

The vessel chosen to make this attempt was the **Sibiryakov (Bellaventure)**. [38] Sailing from Archangel, she first headed east to Dikson where she took on full bunkers before heading east to Severnaya Zamlya. Her next stop was at Ushakov's base camp on the little island off the west coast of the archipelago. He and his companions had been busy in the previous two years: they had explored and mapped the entire archipalego [39] and were able to give the **Sibiryakov's** captain a map of Severnaya Zemlya to assist in the next part of her journey.

No.

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Hours after **Sibiryakov** left the base camp, the **Rusanov** (**Bonaventure**) hove into view, to evacuate Ushakov and his companions. Her next call was at Cape Chelyuskin, the most northerly point in Eurasia, and in many ways the key to the whole Northern Sea Route, where she established a weather station. [40]

Meanwhile **Sibiryakov** had rounded Severnaya Zemlya on the north, the first ship ever to do so, and was butting her way south through the ice of the Laptev Sea to Tiksi at the mouth of the Lena. Here she bunkered, then with a couple of river paddle steamers in tow, headed on east; the latter were bound for the Kolyma River.

On the last leg of her voyage, **Sibiryakov** ran into exceptionally heavy ice, and only a few dozen miles from Bering Strait she lost all the blades off her propeller. Undaunted the Soviet captain had resorted to a manoeuvre almost identical to that resorted to by Capt. George Barbour of the Nascopie in a similar predicament during the 1912 seal hunt here. Putting every man to work, including scientists and journalists, the captain moved all the cargo in the for'ard hold on to the fo'c'slehead, then shifted all the coal for'ard into the for'ard hold. This brought the propeller sufficiently far out of the water that the engineers working from a scaffolding laid on the ice, could replace the broken propeller blades with spares carried for the purpose. The coal and cargo were then restowed and the ship got under way again.

But next day disaster struck again. On the propeller striking a tough floe, the propeller shaft sheared, and the ship was left helpless. Undefeated, the Soviet captain rigged improvised sails from tarpaulins and lifeboat sails, and with a favourable wind and a fair current, managed to sail the **Sibiryakov** out of the ice to where a trawler was waiting to take her in tow in Bering Strait. Thus, although **Sibiryakov** did indeed complete the first one-season passage of the Northern Sea Route, it was far from being an unqualified success.

Sibiryakov was towed south some 2,700 miles to Vladivostok, then proceeded to Yokohama in Japan where repairs were effected. From there she returned to Archangel via the Suez Canal and Gibraltar.

The following year, 1933, saw several major developments; first of all, early in the year came the formation of the Northern Sea Route Administration, a government department with very wide powers, whose main task was to develop the Sea Route as a regularly operating waterway. [41] In its first year of existence, it dispatched two expeditions to bring that goal closer to reality.

Firstly, it was decided to repeat the **Sibiryakov** experiment, in an attempt to get a ship right through the Sea Route in one season. The vessel chosen was a new ice-strengthened freighter, the **Chelyuskin**. [42] In the event the outcome of this venture was even more catastrophic than the previous year. The **Chelyuskin** became helplessly jammed in the ice at about the spot where **Sibiryakov** had lost her propeller, and drifted with the ice gently towards Bering Strait. Right in the Strait, however, the direction of drift changed, and the ship drifted back north into the Arctic Ocean. Ultimately in February, 1934, the ship was crushed and sank; her crew had taken refuge in a camp on the ice, and were evacuated from there by remarkable airlift operations.

The other expedition that year was much more successful, the First Lena Expedition. This was the first convoy of freighters to proceed from the west to the mouth of the massive Lena River. [43] It consisted of three freighters and also a tug and a large barge which would work on the river. The main escort vessel was the **Krasin**, but **Sibiryakov**, **Sedov** and **Rusanov** all played an important support role. Despite very heavy ice in the Kara Sea, they shepherded their charges safely to their destination.

That same year, 1933, saw yet another suprising development. In the search for icebreaking vessels the new Northern Sea Route Administration was ready to consider all possibilities. As a result, after an initial survey the **Sedko** (**Lintrose**) sunk in the White Sea 16 years previously, was raised, cleaned out, and towed to Archangel where a massive refit was put into operation. [44] It was even proposed, too, to refloat the **Ivan Susanin** (**Minto**), which had been wrecked just east of the White Sea in 1922, but this suggestion came to nothing. [45]

It is now time to follow the fortunes of the **Fedor Litke.** In 1923 she was transferred to the Baltic and in 1925 to the Black Sea, where for the next four years she was occupied in maintaining winter navigation to the ports of the Sea of Azov and northern Black Sea. [46] In this she may well have worked in company with the little **Solombala** (**J.T. Horne**), which was also transferred to the Black Sea in the early Twenties, and was sunk there in 1941.

In 1929, however, **Litke** returned to northern waters, initially in response to a crisis which had developed in the Soviet Eastern Arctic. A colony of Siberian Eskimos had been settled on Wrangel Island in 1926, partly to consolidate Soviet sovereignty over the island. Since then, however, all attempts at reaching the island for resupply purposes had been defeated by ice.

Hence in 1929 the **Fedor Litke** was called to undertake a relief operation. Reaching Vladivostok via Suez and Singapore, [47] she loaded with supplies and a relief party for the weather station on Wrangel Island, and steamed north through Bering Strait. Despite extremely heavy ice, she accomplished her mission. [48]

During the winter of 1931-32 she was called upon to undertake another rescue mission. Three steamers were jammed in the ice at various places in the Sea of Okhotsk. In the first extended winter voyage in those waters, lasting from December 5 until May 12, 1932, she rescued all these ships and several others. [49] Of those 159 days **Litke** had spent 141 in ice; at one stage she herself was jammed and almost out of coal, and drifted for 61 days before another ship could relieve her.

After this expedition, **Litke** did not spend very long in Vladivostok. On her next voyage she was bound for the mouth of the Kolyma River. Single ships had been making the trip to the mouth of that river annually since 1911, but now, in order to accelerate development of the Kolyma Basin, the Soviet Government had planned to mount a fairly massive expedition, the Northeastern Polar Expedition, in the summer of 1932. The **Fedor Litke** would escort seven steamers, two river tugs and four barges to the mouth of Kolyma. [50] In the event, the ice in the Chukchi Sea was extremely heavy that summer, and it was September 4th before they reached their destination. This happened to coincide with the arrival of the **Sibiryakov** (**Bellaventure**) bound in the other direction on her through-passage, and they exchanged greetings and good wishes.

With the onset of winter storms and freeze-up, the unloading operation had to be abandoned on September 21, 1932. The **Fedor Litke** and her convoy wintered in a shel-

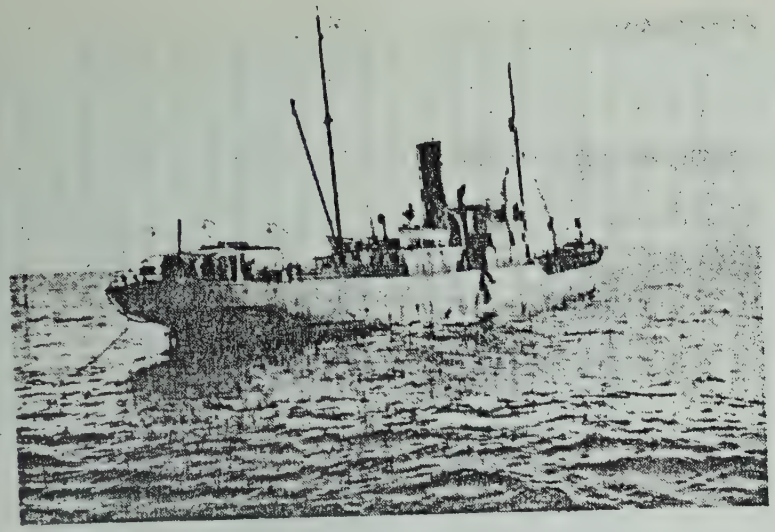

Figure 9. The *Bellaventure* towing the dredge *Port Nelson* from Sydney to Port Nelson, Hudson Bay, in connection with the building of the terminal of the Hudson Bay Railway, August 1913. Photo courtesy Mr. Thomas Appleton.

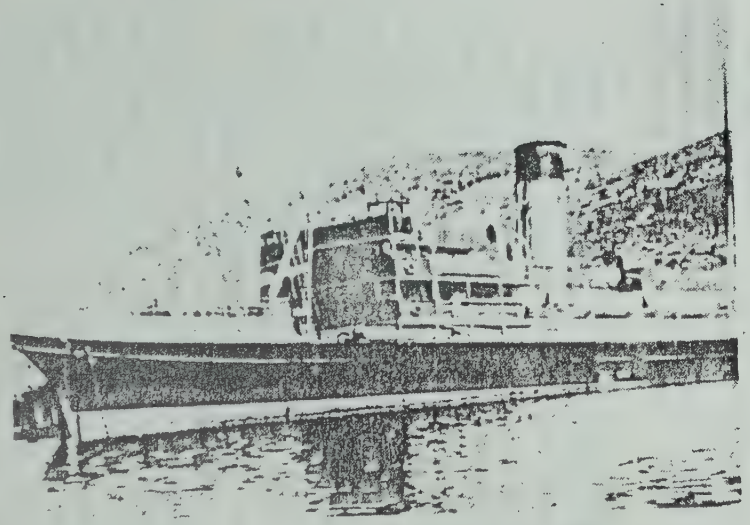

Figure 11. The *Fedor Litke* (formerly the *Earl Grey*) at Petropavlovsk, en route to Wrangel Island, 1929. Photo courtesy Capt. G.D. Burkov.

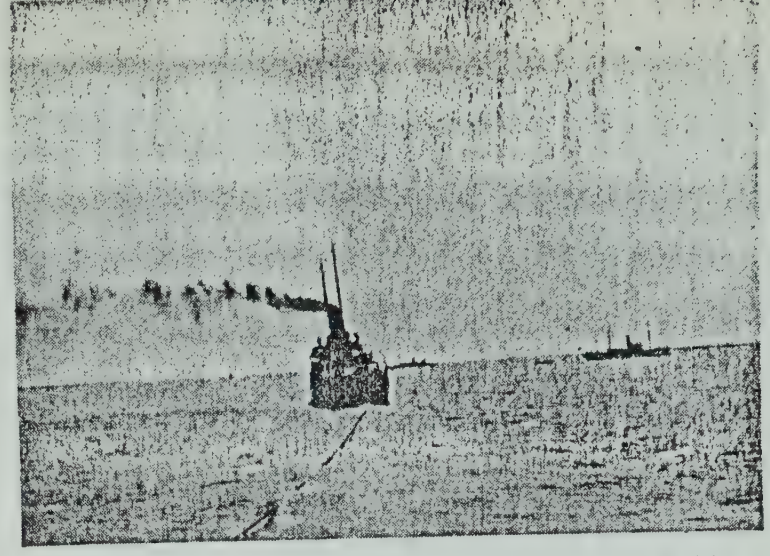

Figure 10. The *Bellaventure* towing the dredge into the mouth of the Nelson River, August 1913. Among the anchored ships is the *Beothic* (right). Photo courtesy Mr. Thomas Appleton.

Figure 12. Aerial view of the *Sedov* (*Beothic*), *Sadko* (*Lintrose*), and *Malygin* (*Bruce*), jammed and drifting in the northern part of the Laptev Sea. Photo taken from one of the planes which evacuated excess personnel, early spring, 1938. Photo courtesy Stefansson Collection, Baker Library, Dartmouth College.

tered spot nearby, finished unloading in the summer of 1933, then started for home. Despite having been quite badly damaged in the ice, the **Fedor Litke** made a gallant attempt to assist the ill-fated **Chelyuskin** as she drifted in the Chukchi Sea in the fall of 1933, [51] and it was not until January 1934 that she returned to Vladivostok.

Determined, despite the outcome of the **Sibiryakov** and **Chelyuskin** expeditions, to demonstrate the feasibility of the Northern Sea Route, in 1934 the Northern Sea Route Administration decided to mount another attempt, this time from east to west. The ship chosen was the **Fedor Litke.**[52] After a major refit in Japan, she sailed from Vladivostok on June 28, 1934; despite heavy ice near Wrangel Island and in the eastern part of the Kara Sea, she reached Murmansk on September 20 and Leningrad on October 7. En route she had liberated three of the ships of the First Lena Expedition, who had been forced to winter in the Laptev Sea. Thus the **Fedor Litke (Earl Grey)** had earned the distinction of being the first ship to traverse the Northern Sea Route in one season without mishap.

The Soviet authorities were quick to follow up this victory; in 1935 the **Fedor Litke** was selected to escort the first freighters through the Sea Route. [53] They were the **Vantsetti** and **Iskra;** they sailed from Leningrad with cargoes of grain on July 8; they reached Vladivostok on October 8th., after a voyage of 7,700 miles.

That same summer, other records were broken. Having been refloated in the summer of 1933, **Sadko (Lintrose)** made a minor shakedown cruise in the summer of 1934, [54] and now in the summer of 1935 she set off on what was called the First High Latitude Expedition. [55] This was primarily an oceanographic expedition; **Sadko** with all the space orginally intended for passenger accommodation, made an excellent scientific research vessel. Leaving Murmansk on July 12, she first carried out oceanographic work in the Greenland Sea, then, rounding the north end of Svalbard, she cut across the Barents Sea and refuelled from a collier in northern Novaya Zemlya. From there she pushed north into the northern part of the Kara Sea, and on north into the Arctic Basin. There she conducted some of the first deepsea oceanographic investigations, and reached a record latitude of 82°31'N at 88°30'E. This was a record for a ship still steaming through the ice; rather than drifting passively with it. On September 28th., **Sadko** was back at Archangel, having made an epic contribution to the study of the Arctic Ocean.

In 1936 the volume of traffic moving to and fro along the various sections of the Northern Sea Route increased substantially. Twelve ships made the through-passage from west to east, and two from east to west. Perhaps most significant is the fact that the first warships were escorted through the Sea Route. These were two small destroyers, **Voykov** and **Stalin.** [56] Being oil-fired they had to take their fuel supplies with them in the tankers **Maykop** and **Lok-Batan.** The veteran icebreaker **Fedor Litke** was given the task of escorting the vulnerable convoy through the ice of the Northern Sea Route. The destroyers left the White Sea on July 30th, and on September 20th **Litke** led them through Bering Strait into the Pacific.

The strategic importance of this voyage is, of course, enormous. It meant that the Soviet Union had the capacity to move surface warships undetected (prior to satellite photography) from Atlantic to Pacific or vice-versa. Some use of this was made during World War II, but the information available on military use of the Northern Sea Route is extremely sketchy.

Next year the tempo of activity on the Northern Sea Route rapidly increased, with all the former Canadian and Newfoundland vessels heavily involved — escorting convoys; establishing and re-supplying weather stations; and carrying out oceanographic work. But this development was to receive a rude shock at the end of the 1937 season. Due to severe ice conditions and some poor decisions as to deployment of icebreakers and movements of convoys, when freeze-up came in the fall, some 27 ships, including all but one of the effective icebreaking vessels, were jammed in the ice, and forced to winter at scattered sites all along the Sea Route.

Thus **Rusanov (Bonaventure)** with two freighters was forced to winter at Tikhaya Bukhta in Zemlya Frantsa Iosifa. They were caught by freeze-up when supporting a late-seasonal aerial search for the missing Soviet pilot Levanevskiy. At Dikson at the mouth of the Yenisey, six Spanish timber ships were caught by freeze-up.

Fedor Litke and a convoy of five ships were trapped in the ice off the south coast of Severnaya Zemlya; **Lenin** with another convoy was drifting in the southern part of the Laptev Sea. Finally, **Sedov (Beothic), Malygin (Bruce)** and **Sadko (Lintrose)** were drifting together to the northwest of the New Siberian Islands. **Sibiryakov (Bellaventure)** was not involved in this disaster, simply because she had run aground near the south tip of Novaya Zemlya the previous fall (1936); had spent the winter half-submerged among the rocks and the ice; had been salvaged in the summer of 1937; and was now undergoing a refit at Archangel. Otherwise she too might well have been forced to winter somewhere along the Sea Route. [57]

In March of 1938 a large scale aerial evacuation of excess personnel took place from **Lenin's** convoy and from **Sedov, Malygin** and **Sadko.** Then when the 1938 navigation season began, the veteran icebreaker **Yermak** battled her way through the ice to rescue one group of ships after another. [58]

Sedov, Malygin and **Sadko** posed the biggest challenge; by August 1938, they had drifted to 83°04'N, to the north of the Laptev Sea. Nevertheless **Yermak** managed to reach them on August 28th., cut them loose, and re-fuelled them. **Sedov (Beothic)** posed the biggest problem; her rudder had been bent in the ice. Hence, she could not steer, and yawed uncontrollably when under tow, so that the towline kept parting. The final solution was to man the ship with a crew of 15 volunteers, provisions for several years, and make the best of a bad job by designating her a high-latitude drifting station. [59] On August 30th., **Malygin, Sadko** and **Yermak** headed south, leaving **Sedov** adrift in the ice.

The **Sedov (Beothic)** drifted steadily north and west, along a route very similar to that taken by Nansen's **Fram** in 1893-96. There were frequent alarms when pressure ridges threatened to engulf and crush the ship, but the **Sedov** survived them all. In August 1939, she reached her highest latitude 86°39'30"N, only 230 miles from the North Pole . Finally, in January 1940, the new icebreaker **Iosif Stalin** ploughed into the edge of the ice to the west of Spitsbergen, rendez-vous'd with the **Sedov**, and broke her free of the ice. Her long drift in the ice, 3,800 miles in 812 days, was over.

The next few years took a heavy toll of the old Newfoundland and Canadian ships. **Malygin (Bruce)** was the

Figure 13. The *Georgiy Sedov* (*Beothic*) during her 28-month drift across the Arctic Ocean (September 1937 to January 1940). Photo courtesy Stafansson Collection, Baker Library, Dartmouth College.

first to go. In 1939 she had made the through passage from Archangel to Vladivostok, escorting freighters and carrying out oceanographic work en route. [60] In 1940, she was back in the Arctic doing survey work in the Chukchi and East Siberian seas; she also re-supplied the weather station on remote Ostrov Genriyetty. But on the way back south she foundered in a hurricane off the east coast of Kamchatka on October 27, 1940. There were no survivors. [61]

With the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1941, the arctic icebreakers began working a double shift, as it were; in winter they were escorting convoys to and from Archangel, while in summer they carried on their normal duties along the Northern Sea Route. In the summer of 1942, two of the old Newfoundland ships were lost in the Kara Sea while on their way to re-supply weather stations.

First the **Sadko (Lintrose)** ran aground and was totally wrecked on one of the lesser known and poorly charted island groups in the Kara Sea. Her entire crew were taken off by the icebreaker **Lenin** which had gone to her rescue, but the ship itself was beyond assistance. [62]

In August of that summer, **Sibiryakov (Bellaventure)** was steaming north across the Kara Sea from Dikson, bound for the weather station at Cape Arkticheskiy on the northern tip of Severnaya Zemlya. [63] Not only was she to re-supply the station and relieve the personnel, but a crew of workmen she was carrying were to enlarge the buildings. Hence there were over 100 people on board.

Suddenly near Ostrov Beluga a strange ship was sighted and was quickly identified as a warship. She was the German pocket-battleship **Admiral Scheer**, prowling the waters of the Kara Sea in search of convoys with war materials coming through the Northern Sea Route from American and Canadian Pacific ports and bound for Archangel. Due to ice and fog, the German raider had been unable to intercept any convoys so far, and on sighting the lone icebreaker, her captain decided to try to seize any ice charts or reports on board the Soviet vessel.

In the event, instead of stopping engines and lowering her flag, the behaviour the officers of the **Scheer** anticipated from their experience of Allied merchant ships in the Atlantic, the **Sibiryakov** turned on full power and headed for the shelter of nearby Ostrov Beluga. And when the first salvo of 11-inch shells from the **Scheer's** main armament came hurtling towards the little icebreaker, the Russian captain responded with a pair of 3-inch guns. By this suicidal conduct, the Soviet captain hoped to delay the German warship long enough to permit a convoy he knew to be nearby to escape into the ice and the fog.

There could be only one outcome to such an unequal contest. Within minutes **Sibiryakov** was on fire and sinking; the captain was badly wounded, but ordered the sea-cocks opened before leaving his ship. Only 19 survivors were picked up by the Germans; one man managed to get ashore on Ostrov Beluga and somehow stayed alive until picked up almost a month later.

Thus only the **Fedor Litke, Sedov** and **Rusanov** survived World War II. In the postwar years, the **Litke** operated almost exclusively as a high-latitude research vessel. First, however, she underwent a major refit at Liverpool in 1947.

In 1948 she carried out oceanographic research in the northern Laptev Sea, east of Severnaya Zemlya. Then in 1955 she was involved in her last major arctic expedition; the main objective was high-arctic oceanography to the north of Franz Josef Land. [64] While on this voyage, she reached the remarkable latitude of 83°11'N. As the highest latitude reached by a surface vessel under power, and not drifting passively with the ice, this record still stands.

The next season, 1956, saw **Litke** on what seems to have been her last trip to arctic waters. She was engaged in a study of the currents in the northern part of the Kara Sea. [65] This fine old ship was finally broken up in 1959, but her wheelhouse is preserved in the Maritime Museum in Moscow.

The postwar careers of **Rusanov (Bonaventure)** and **Sedov (Beothic)** are even more hazy. All that is known about **Rusanov** is that she was taken off the Soviet register of ships in 1957, [66] and was presumably broken up. **Sedov (Beothic)** was still resupplying arctic weather stations in 1955 and 1956. She was removed from the Soviet register of shipping in 1967, [66] and again was presumably broken up.

This completes the story of what happened to these various ships when they sailed from Newfoundland and Canadian waters, so long ago. What they achieved, and their incredible endurance through thousands of miles of battering through arctic ice decade after decade, is a wonderful testimonial to their builders, their designers, and to the Newfoundland captains whose accumulated wisdom and experience in handling ships in ice, was injected into the

Figure 14. Members of the crew of the *Sedov* clearing the ice from her rudder in order to ascertain the damage it had sustained. Photo courtesy Stefansson Collection, Baker Library, Dartmouth College.

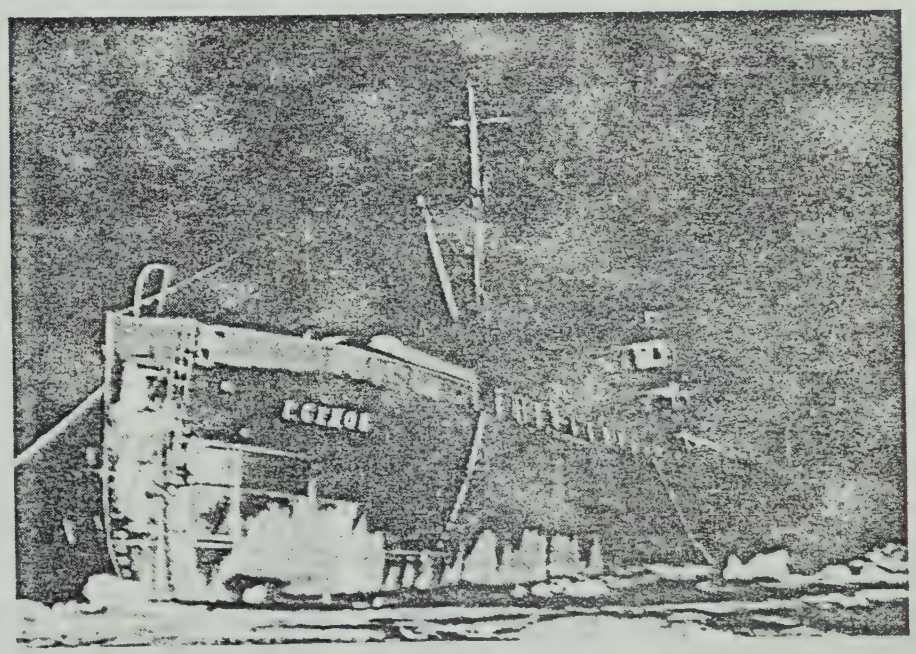

Figure 15. The *Georgiy Sedov* (~~*Bruce*~~ *Beothic*) as she appeared at the end of her drift, when met by the icebreaker *Iosif Stalin* west of Svalbard. January 1940. Photo courtesy Stefansson Collection, Baker Library, Dartmouth College.

Figure 16. Captain K.S. Badigan of the *Sedov* and her radio-operator A.A. Polyanskiy composing a telegram to inform Stalin that *Sedov* has emerged safely from the arctic pack. Photo courtesy Stefansson Collection, Baker Library, Dartmouth College.

design of the Newfoundland ships. However the real credit and kudos must go to the Soviet captains; with these ships, in most cases not specifically designed for working in arctic ice, they opened up the Soviet Northern Sea Route, a route which is now of inestimable importance to the economy of the Soviet Union.

Footnotes

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[38] Vize, V. Yu., *Na "Sibiryakove" i "Litke" cherez ledovitye morya* (Moskva-Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Glavsevmorputi, 1946); Shneyderov, V., *Velikim servernym* (Moskva, Gosudarstvennoye Izdatel'stvo Geograficheskoy Literatury, 1963). Both of these accounts were written by participants in *Sibiryakov's* through passage. In that Professor Vize was the scientist in charge of the scientific programme, and Shneyderov was in charge of the film-crew on board, their accounts, as might be expected, complement each other very effectively. See also: Belov, 1959, *op. cit.*, pp. 410-423.

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[41] Belov, 1969, *op. ci.*, pp. 94-104.

[42] Belov, *ibid.*, pp. 106-150; Shmidt, O. Yu. *et. al.*, *The voyage of the Chelyuskin* (London, Chatto and Windus, 1935).

[43] Belov, 1969, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-253; Morozov, S., *Leskiy pokhod* (Moskva, Molodaya Gvardiya, 1934); Anonymous, "Lenskaya morskaya transportnaya ekspeditsiya 1933 goda," *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta*, 5 (1934), 216-218.

[44] Simonov, P.V., *op. cit.*; Anonymous, "The salvage of the ice-breaking steamer 'Sadko'," *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta*, 9-10 (1933), 323; Anonymous, "The ice-breaking cargo steamer 'Sadko'," *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta*, 11 (1933), 393.

[45] Anonymous, "Proyektiruemyy pod'em ledokol'nogo parokhoda 'Ivan Susanin'," *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta*, 11 (1933), 356.

[46] Nikolayeva and Srankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

[47] Dublitskiy, K.A., "Plavaniye ledoreza 'F. Litke' v 1929 g. iz Sevastopolya k o-vu Vrangelya," *Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Okeanograficheskogo Instituta*, 4 (1933), 5-29.

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[49] Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-93; Alekseyev, N.N., "O reyse ledoreza 'Fedor Litke' v Okhotskom more zimoy 1931-1932," *Issledovaniya morey SSSR*, 22 (Leningrad, Gosudarstvenniy Gidrologicheskiy Institut, 1935).

[50] Belov, 1959, *op. cit.*, pp. 424-429; Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-115; Zinger, M.E., *V bitve za Sever* (Moskva-Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Glavsevmorputi, 1948), pp. 84-149.

[51] Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-121; Shmidt *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-60.

[52] Vize, 1946, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-260; Nikolayeva and Sarankin, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-145; Belov, 1969, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-158.

[53] Belov, *ibid.*, pp. 166-169; Gakkel', Ya. Ya., "Reys 'Vantsetti' i 'Iskry'," *Byulleten' Arkticheskogo Instituta*, 1 (1936), 14-16.

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[59] Badigin, K.S., *Tri zimovki vo l'dakh Arktiki* (Moskva, Izdatel'stvo Ts. K. VLKSM "Molodaya Gvardiya," 1950); Buynitskiy, V. Kh., *812 dney v ledovom dreyfe* (Moskva-Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo Glavsevmorputi, 1945). Both of these accounts were written by members of the 15-man party aboard *Sedov* during her drift, Badigin being the captain and Buynitskiy being in charge of the scientific programme. An excellent summarized version in English can be found in Armstrong, T., *The Russians in the Arctic* (Fair Law, New Jersey, Essential Books, 1958), pp. 17-50.

[60] Anonymous, "Skvozniy reys ledokol'nogo parokhoda 'Malygin'," *Sovetskaya Arktika*, 12 (1939), 103.

[61] Belov, 1969, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

[62] Belov, 1969, *op. cit.*, p. 457; Finyakin, N.A., "Uroki dvukh avariy" in: *Arkticheskiye navigatsii, I*, N.N. Zubov (ed.) (Moskva-Leningrad, Izdatel'stvo glavsevmorputi, 1941), pp. 185-191.

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